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~~Remarks~~

Claims 1-18 were pending in the application. Claims 1-3 and 5-12 were rejected. Claims 13-18 were withdrawn. Claim 4 was merely objected to and no claims were allowed. By the foregoing amendment, no claims are canceled, claim 3 is amended, and claims 19-21 are added. No new matter is presented.

Restriction was required as follows:

- I. Claims 1-12, drawn to apparatus, classified in class 416, subclass 198A.
- II. Claims 13-18, drawn to method, classified in class 416, subclass 198A.

Applicants affirm the election of Group I with traverse. Traverse is on the grounds that examination of all the claims would not present an undue burden. Although separately classified, the search classes of the two groups are expected to largely, if not completely, overlap. Accordingly, if the restriction requirement is withdrawn, claims 1-21 will be examined. If not withdrawn, claims 1-12 and 19-21 will be examined.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter in claim 4.

Specification

The specification has been amended as helpfully suggested in the Office action and also to correct clear errors.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 102

Claim 1 was rejected as being anticipated by Lombard (Canadian Patent No. 534,694). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Office action identified elements 27 and 28 of Lombard as a retainer segment. Lombard element 28 is "an annular member". Col. 3, line 51. Lombard element 27 is a "ring nut". Col. 3, line 50. Because both are thus full, uninterrupted, annuli, neither is a "segment". As is discussed in further detail below, Lombard alone or in combination with Hackstie et al. fails to

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suggest this claimed configuration.

Claims Rejections-35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 2, 3, 6, and 7-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lombard in view of Hackstie et al. (US Patent No. 5,161,951). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Elements 16, 24, and 30 of Hackstie et al. were asserted as a full annulus rebate, a segmented retainer, and a collar, respectively. However, the subject elements relate to retention of a dummy disk 9 which is shrink fit onto a shaft 8. Col. 3, lines 8 & 9. This does not relate to precompression of a rotor stack. Furthermore, item 30 is clearly identified as a closure piece that fits into a slot. Col. 4, lines 12 & 13. FIGS. 7 and 8 clearly show this to be a single small segment circumferentially coextensive with the locking retainer 24. Thus, it is not an annular collar as in claim 3. (see "full annulus retaining ring 220..." in paragraph 0034/0032 of the PG Pub/application).

It was asserted as obvious "to modify the retainer of Lombard by including a shaft rebate, collar, and retainer segments as taught by Hackstie in order better secure the rotor stack on the shaft." This is a mere conclusion without support in the art. There is no indication that Lombard required such modification. As noted above, due to the insufficiencies of Lombard and Hackstie et al., even if there were suggestion to combine, the combination would fail to yield the claimed invention.

Regarding claim 8, the Office action had the mere conclusory assertion that providing the identified divergence would have been obvious. Nevertheless, the claim is believed patentable for the same reasons as the base claim.

Regarding claim 10, the Office action had the mere conclusory assertion that it would have been obvious "to adjust the precompression force based on the specific size of the rotor stack..." Office action, paragraph 13. However, there is no indication that this is an appropriate compression force for the Lombard stack. The Lombard stack features splined interconnection between the disk central apertures and the shaft (see elements 11 and 18). This provides a mechanical linkage that may reduce the requirements of precompression.

New claims 19 and 20 identify the shaft as passing freely through the central apertures.

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Support for this is found at paragraph 0025 of the pre-grant publication (0023 of the as-filed application). New claim 21 identifies disk apertures as being clear of the shaft. Support for this is found at paragraph 0026 of the pre-grant publication (0024 of the as-filed application). Neither Lombard or Hackstie et al., alone or in combination, teach or suggest this.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lombard in view of Hackstie et al. as applied to claim 2, and further in view of the engineering expedient of providing "segmented parts in two pieces to minimize installation time." Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

There is no suggestion to use two parts. Hackstie et al. clearly teaches a complex, multi-segment arrangement with many retainers 15 and a single retainer 24. There is no suggestion to modify this to be just a two-segment system. This would involve totally altering the nature and operation of the retainer segments of Hackstie et al.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 1-21 are in condition for allowance. Please charge any fees or deficiency or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: November 14, 2005

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being faxed this 14th day of November, 2005 to the USPTO, at Fax No. 1-571-273-8300.


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